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The Illinois Department on Aging

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA



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ILLINOIS CARES . . . About Its Seniors

- seniors centers
- recreation
- housing
- meal programs
- income stretchers
- employment
- health care
- volunteer opportunities
- adult education

**So you're 55 . . .
or 60 . . .
or 65 Plus . . .
and an Illinois
senior citizen . . .**

Perhaps you are thinking about retirement . . . a change of lifestyle . . . more time to do the things you want to do . . . have extra visits with family . . . do some traveling . . . move into a new living arrangement.

Whatever your choices, look around you . . . Illinois has what it takes for a whole lifetime of opportunity.

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- **If You Want to Meet Other Seniors . . .**

Senior centers have become special places for many of the 1.8 million persons age 60 and over in Illinois. Active, interested individuals gather here for fellowship, recreation and a noon meal. Many centers also offer transportation and legal services, exercise programs and tax assistance, along with various other activities. Check your phone book for the one nearest you, or call your Area Agency on Aging.

- **If You Want to Travel, Hunt, Fish, Camp, etc. . . .**

Don't forget that Illinois has its own special travel highlights. There are many day and weekend trips just a few hours away. For copies of the "Illinois Calendar of Events" and "The Illinois Book," contact the Department of Commerce and Community Affairs, Division of Tourism, (217) 782-7139 in Springfield or (312) 793-2094 in Chicago.

Also remember that if you are 65 or older, you can obtain a Golden Years Hunting and Fishing License; and if you are 62 or older, you can obtain a Golden Age Passport, which provides free lifetime admission to national parks, monuments and recreation areas. Contact the Illinois Department of Conservation, (217) 785-3423.

Have fun camping too — From Monday through Thursday, seniors 62-64 can camp at state-managed campgrounds for half rate and individuals 65 and over can camp free of charge.

- **If You're Looking for Housing Options . . .**

The Department on Aging and the Illinois Housing Development Authority have made a joint effort to identify elderly housing in your county. For information, call the Department on Aging toll free, 1-800-252-8966.

- **If You Want to Stretch Your Income . . .**

Illinois helps seniors stretch their incomes further through various programs. For example,

- The Circuit Breaker is a program providing tax relief to eligible seniors in the form of a property tax/rent relief grant and an additional tax relief grant. For information, contact the Illinois Department of Revenue, (217) 782-6850 or 1-800-732-8866.
- The Homestead Exemption allows senior homeowners to have their real estate taxes reduced regardless of their income or the original amount of real estate taxes. For information, contact your County Supervisor of Assessments.
- Pharmaceutical assistance for heart and blood pressure drugs, as well as medicine for the treatment of diabetes and arthritis, is available through a program administered by the Department of Revenue, 1-800-732-8866.
- A Silver Pages Discount Program is coordinated by the Secretary of State's Office and Southwestern Bell Media. To apply for a discount card, call toll free: 1-800-252-6060 or 1-800-252-2904.

- **If You Need Employment . . .**

Many employment and training opportunities are available statewide for individuals 55 and over. For more information, contact your local Job Service office or your Area Agency on Aging.

- **If You Need Health Insurance Information . . .**

For Medicare information, call your local Social Security office and for Medicaid information, call your local Public Aid office. A booklet about health care and insurance options, with locations and phone numbers of local offices throughout the state, is available through the Department on Aging. The Department of Insurance also answers questions and complaints about insurance companies, and can be reached by calling (217) 782-4515 in Springfield or (312) 917-2427 in Chicago.

- **If You or Someone You Know Is Physically Impaired and Needs In-Home or Day Care Services . . .**

If you are unable to get about as much as you used to, find it difficult to do house-cleaning and laundry, and have no family or friends able to help, you may be eligible for Community Care services. Or, if you are caring for an elderly parent, you may want to find out how to receive assistance. Call the Department on Aging, 1-800-252-8966.

- **If You or Someone You Know Needs Nursing Home Care . . .**

Illinois has many good nursing homes, and residents are protected by efficient enforcement of health standards and a state-wide system of ombudsmen. To obtain a guide on selecting a nursing home or alternative care programs, or to get help with complaints about nursing home care, contact the Illinois Nursing Home Advocacy Hot Line, 1-800-252-4343.

- **If You Wish to Know More About Services for the Handicapped . . .**

The Illinois Department of Rehabilitation Services offers a Directory of Services for Handicapped People. Call (217) 785-3893.

- **If You Are Interested In Helping Others . . .**

Illinois has a range of volunteer opportunities for seniors. For example, the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) offers positions in hospitals, schools, home-delivered meal programs and community service agencies. The Department on Aging also coordinates Nursing Home Ombudsman Programs statewide. For information on other volunteer programs, call the Governor's Office of Voluntary Action, (312) 917-2789.

- **If You Have Questions About Crime or Consumer Fraud . . .**

The Attorney General's Office works statewide to combat consumer fraud and crime against the elderly. Call toll free: 1-800-243-5377, Chicago or 1-800-252-2518, Springfield. The Department on Aging also has a slide program and brochures that provide tips on how to prevent fraud and other con games. Call 1-800-252-8966 or (312) 917-2630.

- **If You Want a General Listing of Services for Seniors . . .**

Call the Lieutenant Governor's Senior Action Office for a handbook of services for older people in the state, 1-800-252-6565.

- **If You Need Assistance with Heating Bills or Weatherizing Your Home . . .**

The Department of Commerce and Community Affairs administers the Illinois Home Energy Assistance Program and the Home Weatherization Program. Call toll-free 1-800-252-8643, or check with the Community Action Agency in your area about similar programs.

- **If You Are Interested
in Adult Education . . .**

Your local school district probably offers adult education classes, or check with the nearest community college or university to find out about their education programs. Reduced tuition or fee waivers are often available for seniors. Another exciting educational opportunity is Elderhostel, a special low-cost residential academic program for seniors which combines learning with travel. For information call (217) 786-2433.

- **If You Want to Know
About Other Programs . . .**

The Illinois Department on Aging can tell you how to find out more about other services, such as those relating to Alzheimer's Disease, elder abuse, etc. Call toll-free: 1-800-252-8966.

The Illinois Department on Aging works closely with, and provides state and federal funding to, 13 Area Agencies on Aging. These agencies are responsible for planning services and programs for older persons in their respective areas and can provide you with more detailed information about local programs. If you are not sure how to contact the Area Agency serving your county, call the Illinois Department on Aging toll-free, 1-800-252-8966.

Illinois Department on Aging

421 East Capitol
Springfield, Illinois 62701

100 West Randolph
Chicago, Illinois 60601

The Department on Aging does not discriminate in admission to or treatment of employment in programs or activities in compliance with the Illinois Human Rights Act, the U.S. Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended, and the U.S. Constitution.

• Did You Know?

The Department on Aging and Area Agencies on Aging make it possible for local agencies and service providers to receive funding for a variety of programs. You may be interested in knowing some facts that illustrate our efforts to serve Illinois seniors effectively:

- Over 147,000 seniors participate in meal programs annually, and over 344,000 participate in other services ranging from senior center activities and transportation services to counseling and legal services.
- There are some 610 group meal sites providing an average of over 21,000 meals per day in Illinois. Another 11,000 meals per day are served to homebound seniors.
- Over 25,000 individuals who are at risk of institutionalization receive in-home or adult day care services, making it possible for them to continue living in their own homes and communities.
- Over 20,000 calls a year are handled by the Department on Aging's information and referral toll-free line, and over 211,000 seniors receive information and referral services through Area Agencies on Aging.
- Over 13,000 nursing home residents will be visited this year by the hundreds of volunteers associated with the Department on Aging's Nursing Home Ombudsman Program.
- Over 2,800 persons were diverted from nursing homes this year, meaning that case managers determined that in-home care is more appropriate for their needs.
- This year, Senior Employment Specialists at the Area Agencies on Aging will assist over 1,800 persons to obtain employment through linkages with training opportunities, Job Service and employers.
- The Department on Aging and seven national contractors have enrolled over 2,700 seniors in the Senior Community Service Employment Program to date, a program providing part-time employment opportunities for persons 55 and over who have limited income.